

C. SHLO 9 - 0006
 SHLO 9 - 0012

MAJOR-GENERAL BAKER (Chief of Staff, LIVE OAK) said that General Norstad was of the opinion that the next Soviet move was likely to be against our air access rights and that it might well be initiated during the period of the forthcoming German elections. General Norstad also felt strongly that, first, any Western counter-action should be tripartite and not unilateral; and, secondly, that we should respond to any such action immediately; he believed that the delay caused by reference to Governments was not acceptable. It was for these reasons that the two telegrams under consideration had been initiated. The Committee would now have seen a telegram from the Ambassadorial Group* which had arrived that morning and gave some answers to General Norstad's request. A number of points remained to be resolved; first, the position in regard to the operation of civil aircraft if the companies considered it was unsafe to continue flying; secondly, the difference between the rules of engagement which had previously been agreed by Her Majesty's Government and those issued unilaterally¹⁹ to CINCUSAFE; and, thirdly, the question of delegating authority to General Norstad to order the destruction of balloons and other obstacles within the air corridors and to attack ground targets.

In discussion the following points were made:-

- (c) The Air Ministry had completed arrangements with BEA for the training of 5 air crews on Viscounts and this would be completed by Tuesday, 19th September, 1961. It was the intention that these crews should be kept available to take over Viscount services at short notice and that two of the crews would fly supernumerary with BEA air crew on Berlin services. Final details of financial arrangements and compensation were not complete but in an emergency it would be possible to put the procedure into effect at very short notice. It was important that the procedure for military crews to take over civil aircraft should be incorporated in JACK PINE to avoid any possibility of unilateral implementation. The Ambassadorial Group and LIVE OAK should be informed accordingly.
- (d) The rules of engagement as agreed by H.M. Government differed from those ordered by the Americans in that the latter permitted a U.S.A.F. pilot to fire first. This was contrary to the U.K. policy which sought to force the other side to fire the first shot and which had previously been tripartitely agreed in the rules embodied in JACK PINE. It was highly desirable to adopt the JACK PINE rules forthwith.

* Washington to Foreign Office 2397
 / Foreign Office to Washington No.6395
 @ UKNMR 351

- (e) Balloons could be considered under two categories: those flown in the corridors and those placed on the approaches to the Berlin airfields (say, within 10 nautical miles thereof). But both types had one thing in common in that they evidenced a conscious decision to attempt to obstruct air passage. The former need give little cause for anxiety, since they would need to be flown in large numbers seriously to hinder passage and since they could be circumnavigated or overflowed. It was therefore not necessary to delegate authority to destroy them should they materialise. However, those placed on the approaches to the Berlin airfields were a different proposition and would, in certain weather conditions, present a dangerous obstacle; General Norstad should accordingly have delegated authority to destroy them when they appeared. Other obstacles, such as high towers, would take time to materialise, and accordingly no delegated authority was called for.
- (f) Gun and missile sites differed from balloons in that it was possible in a period of tension for a commander at a low level to open fire without authority. There was thus a chance that an isolated shot might be fired, and it was highly undesirable to give delegated authority for counter-action whilst this possibility existed. Moreover, there were a large number of such sites near the corridor, and it was most unlikely that an aircraft fired upon in this way would be able to identify the site from which the shot had been fired. It was understood that Ministers had already decided that General Norstad should not be given the authority he sought to attack ground targets, and there was no military justification for recommending to Ministers that they should reconsider this decision.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (5) Invited the Air Ministry to prepare a draft telegram covering the point at (c) above for the Foreign Office to despatch to H.M. Ambassador, Washington, and to the United Kingdom Delegation in Paris for LIVE OAK.
- (6) Invited the Foreign Office to take note of their views as at (d), (e) and (f) above.